

29.

REFORMATION AND DESOLATION:

OR,
A Sermon tending to the Discovery of
the Symptomes of a People to whom God
will by no meanes be reconciled.

Preached to the Honourable House of Com-
mons at their late solemne Fast,
Decemb. 22. 1641.

By Stephen Marshall B. D. Minister of Finching-
field in E S S E X.

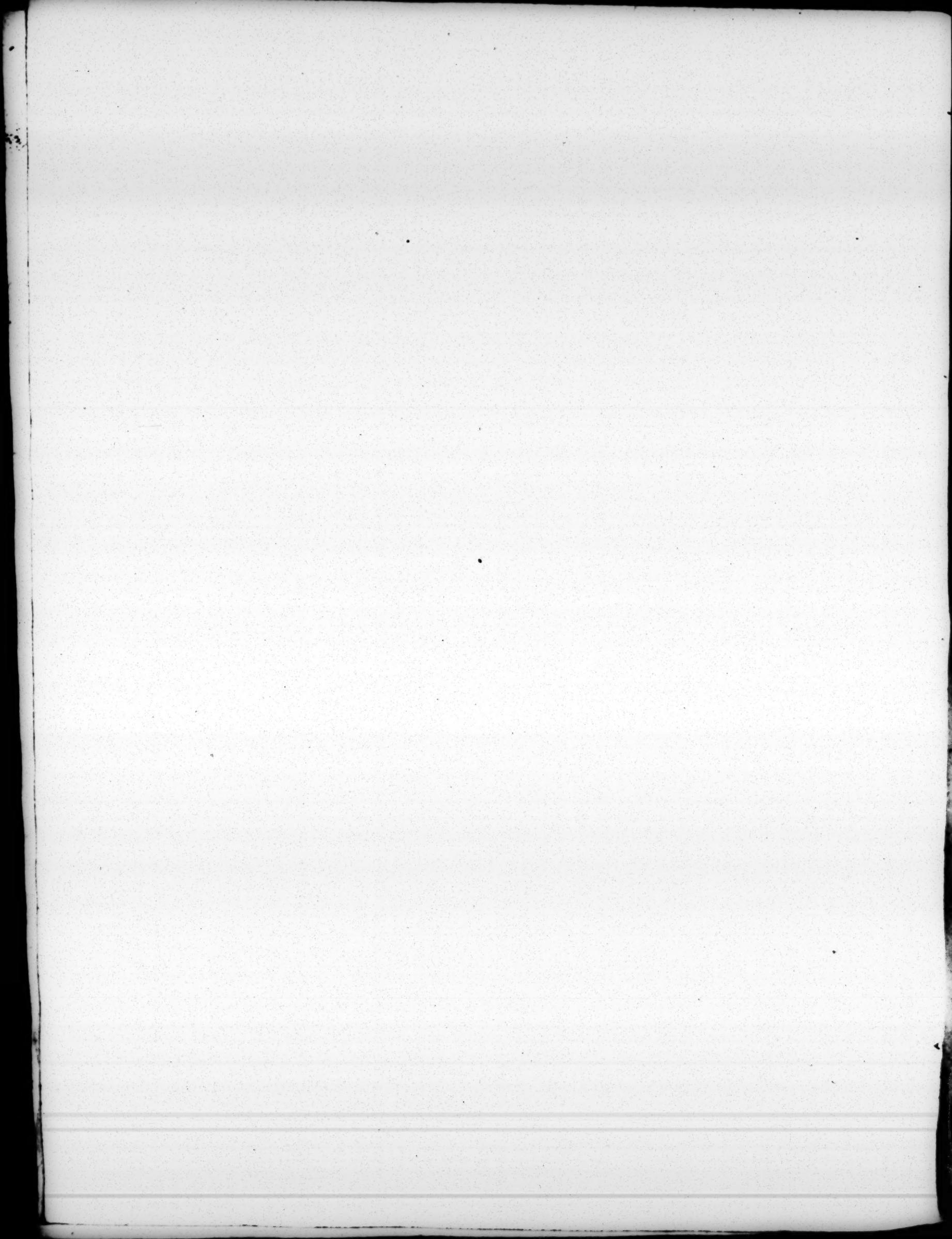
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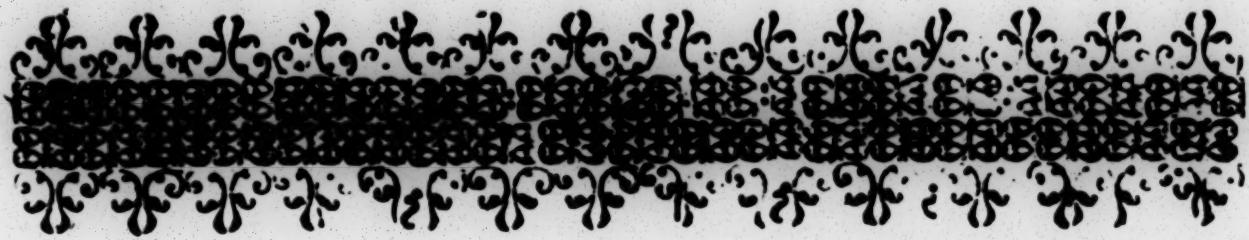
Zeph. 2. 1, 2.

*Gather your selves together, yea gather together O Nation
not desired, before the decree bring forth.*

LONDON,

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the Brisen Serpent in Pauls Church-
yard, 1642.





To the Honourable House of Commons, now assembled in Parliament.



I pleased this Honourable Assembly to require my service in preaching at the late solemn and religious afflicting your soules before the Lord, to which not only my duty but experience of your former acceptance of my endeavours, made me yeeld a ready obedience. But although I knew your goodnessse would beare with that weaknesse which would be discovered in speaking to so grave and judicious an auditory; yet could I not expect to receive so large a testimony, not only of your acceptation, but thanks, as I and my Colleague have done, much lesse that you should so expressly send to have them published; because now what blame shall be cast upon my insufficiency in handling and prosecuting such a subject, must in some sort reflect upon your selves. For my selfe I answer all objections against my sending them abroad, with this, that they are yours, and it is fit for me to yeeld unto your disposing of them.

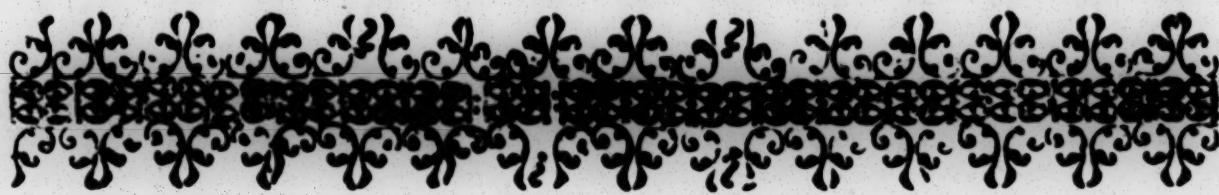
For the maine lesson handled, the Lord grant that our seeking him while he may be found, may prevent us from being a further prooef of it to other Nations, and succeeding generations.

And to this end, the same Lord guide and blesse unto

The Epistle Dedicatory.

us, and reward into your owne bosomes, and your posterities, all the many, long, and unweareid labours which you have undergone, and still continue in for the glory of his name, the reformation of his Church, the honour of his Majestie, the peace and prosperity of the whole Realme. This is so generally desired and sought for at Gods hand's, that I hope the God who careth prayers, will not leave the happiness imperfect, which he seemes to have prepared by your meanes, nor deprive us of the good which you are working. To his wisedome, protection, mercy and grace, be leaves you, who is your daily remembrancer at the Throne of Grace.

STEPHEN MARSHALL.



A Sermon Preached at the late Fast, before the COMMONS House of PARLIAMENT.

2 KINGS 23.26. Read also vers.25.

And like unto him (that is King Iosiah) there was no King before him that turn'd to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soule, and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses; neither afterwards arose any like unto him.

Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fiercenesse of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withall.



His King Iosiah (Right Honourable and Beloved) may most truly bee counted, not only one of the Worthies of the World, but also one of the Worlds Wonders : There is hardly any thing recorded of him but what is wonderfull; his very birth was wonderfull, he being prophesied of by name, about 350 yeers before he was born : And

*Introducti-
on*

*King 13.
20*

Introducti-
on.

therein fore-promised to doe those great things which he effected against Idolaters, and the Reliques of Idolatry. And it was as wonderfull, to think in what a *desperate condition*, and time of the Church he was born, in the darkest midnight of apostasy, when the ten Tribes were carried away captive, and *Judah* and *Benjamin* only left, and they (is farre as the eye of man could see) wholly and generally fallen from the Lord their God to all manner of *Idols* and *Idolatries*: when the very Temple of God was made a denre of Idols; nay, his *Altar* the only Altar of Israel destroyed, to make roome for Altars erected to Idols: When the true Church had hardly any visible being upon the face of the earth; yea, I am perswaded that in the *darkest times of Anti-christianity*, the true Church of Christ was never more *invisible*, than it was about that time when *Iosiah* was born. And it was another *wonder*, that in such a strong faction as Idolatry then had, that any could possibly so prevaile in the *Court*, as to give such education to the young Prince. Nor is it lesse *wonderfull* that by that time he was but *sixteen* yecres old, he stood out a perfect godly man, undertaking the *cause of God*, and the *Reformation of Religion*: and that with such a perfect *beart* to make the most *complete and absolute reformation* of the Church, that ever was wrought by any mortall man, since God had a Church on earth. But the *successe* of his labours seemes to mee the most *wonderfull* of all the rest, whether you look upon the *successe* it had with *the people*, or the *successe* it had with *God*.

2 Chr. 34.3

The *successe* with *the people* was *this*, that although at *Iosiahs* first appearing as a right Orient and illustrious Starre in a darke night, there was hardly any visible *wor-ship*.

ship or Worshipper to bee found ; yet he carried all before him like a *torrent*, and walked like a man of fire, (as his name signifies, *the fire of the Lord*) and brought the whole Nation so about, that there was scarce ever such a *Covenant* made as he procured, and that not by a prevailing *party*, but the *Universality* of his Kingdome joyned with him in it, and continued in it, and held close to it all the time that *Iosiah* lived in the world. This was the successe that hee found among the people. , Chr. 34.
31.32.33.

But now the successe that all this found with God is yet more *wonderfull*, and this my Text will tell you of, viz. that notwithstanding such a *rare man*, was thus wonderfully stirred up, thus miraculously carried on, with such a perfect heart, with such a unanimous consent of his people, to set upon the work of reforming Religion; and did it so as never mortall man did the like before, nor any arose after. ward like unto him ; yet notwithstanding all this the Lord turned not away from the fiercenesse of his great wrath, &c.

And so now you see my Text is a description of the altogether *hopelesse* and *helplesse* condition of the Church of the Jewes, though there was a Physitian risen up, who had found out the most pretious balme that ever was, and faithfully applyed it ; yet the hurt of Gods people could receive no cure, but they must die for it.

And this may be reduced to these two Heads.

First, you have their miserable and forlorne estate in these words : (*Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fiercenesse of his great wrath which was kindled against Iudah.*)

Secondly, you have the cause of all this, what it was

The scope
of Text
and parts
of it.

Introduc-
tion. — that made God irreconcilably and inexorably set against them in these words ; because of all the provocations wherewith Manasses had provoked him ; though he were dead between thirty and forty yeeres before *Iosiah* ended his dayes, yet his provocations were the cause that God would never bee reconciled to his people, though hee was reconciled to *Manasses* person before hee died.

I purpose not any exact or large handling of this text, nor is it possibly to be done in one Sermon : I shall only cull out such things as are most intended by the holy Ghost, and most suitable to the occasion of our meeting.

Observa-
tion from
the con-
nexio[n].

And first, let us in a few words consider it in relation to the former verse ; and secondly, as it lies in it selfe. As it stands in relation to the former description made of *Iosiah*, and the high praises which God there bestowes upon him. I thence observe, That when God raises up any excellent instruments to appeare in his cause, they are most gratioufly accepted with him, though their endeavours should come to nothing : there shall be glory and honour, and immortality, and eternall life to themselves, though there be indignation, and wrath, tribulation, anguish, and woe, upon the people whom they would willingly doe good unto. This you see plainly in this text ; *Iosiah* sets up a building which was instantly thrown down stick and stone ; yet never man received better wages and greater reward than he did. God hath raised up many worthy instruments to doe him service, who have had admirable successe in their way. *Moses* brought Gods people out of the bondage of *Egypt*, carried them through a desolate, wastfull, howling Wilderness, and that miraculously for forty yeeres together, *Ioshua* gave them the possession

Deut. 29. 5
Josh. 2. 14.
5.

possession of the promised land, and left them in it in peace. David subdued all their enemies about them, until they were all put *under the soles of their feet, leaving them neither adversary nor evill occurrent.* Solomon built Gods Temple, and established the Church in the purity of Gods Worship and Ordinances, and the Common-wealth with admirable peace and prosperity; yet, not any of these more magnified by the Lord than *Iosiah*, whose work came to nothing. This is my first observation; and it hath these two branches; first it implies, that *the endevours of rare Instruments may come to nothing*, that men may bee stirred up with admirable spirits to attempt great things for God, and yet their work miscarry.

In two branches.

Secondly, that though their work come to nothing, yet themselves shall be highly magnified with the Lord.

I could easily give abundant testimonies and instances of such whom God hath raised up with extraordinary spirits; men that wee might think had been fit to carry the world before them, who have effected little or nothing: *Elias* for one, a man (as it were) made of fire, who at one time, called a *Parliament of the King*, and *all the Heads of Israel together*, convinced them of their halting between God and *Baal*, and wrought so at the present, that all the people cryed out *the Lord is God*, and seemed to have their hearts brought back again to *the Lord their God*; and likewise that eight hundred Idolatrous Priests and false Prophets were put to the sword; yet the very next day, he was faine to run away to save his life, undertaking a journey of forty dayes to keep himselfe from the fury of *Iezabel*. *Ieremy* was a another rare man, one of the most zealous Instruments

1 Branch,
The endevours
of rare in-
struments
maie come
to no-
thing.

2 Kings: 8.
19.

Ier. 15.10

Ier. 20.9.

that ever God employed, insomuch that he said of himselfe, that he was a man of contention to all the earth ; and Gods word was in him like fire in his bones, which he could not keep in ; yet this man in his almost forty yeares preaching, could neither prevail with King, nor Princes, Prophets, Priests, nor People ; all grew worse and worse, and himselfe in the end was carried away, by a rebellious company, into that accursed land of *Ægypt*, and there died.

See to this
purpose,
Math. 23.
34, 17 Acts
7.52. Heb.
11.37, 38.

Second
Branch.
Yet them-
selves
highly
magnified
and re-
warded by
God.

And it hath been often observed, that the Lord hath scene it fit for reasons best knowne to himselfe, to let abundance of the worthies whom he hath employed even (so farre as men could judge,) to perish in the work he hath set them about.

But secondly, whatever their successe hath beene amongst men, they have been never a whit lesse regarded, or rewarded by the Lord ; for this the Scripture is plaine, *Esay 49. 5.* There the Prophet in Christ's name, and in his owne name, and in the name of all Gods instruments, concludes, *That though they spend their strength for nought, and in vaine ; yet surely their work is with the Lord ; and though the people be not gathered, yet they shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and their God will be their strength.* And *Paul saith, 2 Cor. 2. 15.* *We are a sweet savour to God in them that perish, as well as in them that are saved.*

And there is plaine reason for it, because sincere endeavours to doe God service is our whole work ; but the successe of these endeavours is Gods work. Now the Lord hath tied himselfe in his Covenant, to reward every man according to his owne work, and not according to the work of another : God never required at the hands of

of any Minister to save soules, or at the hand of any
i-^f gistrate to preservea Nation, of any husbandman to
produce a crop out of the ground, &c. this belongs on-
ly to himselfe; he only requires at their hands to be
his servants, ^{to obey his will}; wherein if they be *faithfull*,
they shall not misse of their *reward*. God compares
Kings and Princes, and other of his servants, to *nursing*
fathers, and *nursing mothers*: Now you that are persons
of quality, if you put forth a childe to nurse, and can
have perfect information that the nurse loves, attends,
suckles your childe, and performes all the duties be-
longing to a *nursing mother*; this nurse, I say, is by
you *esteemed* and *rewarded*, whether the childe live or
die: yea it may be the more when the childe dies, be-
cause you see her afflieted in losing your childe which
she would gladly have enjoyed.

I doe but name this, you are wise to apply it to your
selves, you (Right honourable and beloved) are em-
ployed in *great services*, God hath raised you up to
attempt glorious things for his *name*, for the purging
of his *house*, and the establishing of this great people
in the *peace of the Gospel*: how farre God will use any
of you, I cannot tell; and how faire this unworthy
Nation will acknowledge your indefatigable paines, I
cannot tell; as yet you have the prayers and blessings
of all sorts of people, high and low, rich and poore,
that wish well to Sion. But however goe on, yee Wor-
thies of the Lord, with sincere hearts to doe what God
requires at your hands; and whether this Nation be
gathered or not, you shall be *glorious in the eyes of*
God, and the Lord will be your strength. *Iosiah* you see
had the greatest commendation of all others, notwith-
standing

Esay 49.

^{2, 2.}

¹ *Thes. 2.7.*

Applicati-
on to the
Parlia-
ment.

standing the Lord turned not from his fierce wrath : and this is all I have to say from the connection of the words, that God magnified *Iosiah*, though his work came to nothing.

Now let us consider them in themselves, where I shall not need before so grave and intelligent Assembly, to waste the time in analising or giving the grammatical interpretation of so plaine and easie a Text, I shall only take up three doctrinall observations (which you will see to lie clearly in the words) and handle them as the Lord shall please to enable me, and the time permit ; whereof the first is :

Doct. 1. *That Gods wrath is a most fearfull and dreadfull thing when it is once throughly kindled.*

Doct. 2. The second and maine doctrine is, *That the sins of a Church and people may come to that heighth, and Gods wrath may be kindled to that heat, that notwithstanding their reformation, God will inexorably goe on to a desolation.* Notwithstanding all that *Iosiah* did, the Lord turned not from his fierce wrath.

Doct. 3. The third is, this being done for *Manassehs* provocations I observe, *That the sins of one generation may be the ground and cause of the destruction and ruine of the succeeding generation.* The abominations that *Manasses* committed and commanded in his time, were the cause why God was unappeasably bent to the destruction of the generation that lived after him.

First Doc-
trine
from the
Text, that
the wrath
of God is
exceeding
fierce.

I begin with the first, *That the wrath of God, when it is greatly kindled, is extreme fierce ; or it is a most dreadfull thing to bee under Gods wrath when it is once kindled.* Mark how the words here are edg'd, how wonderfully emphaticall, how dreadfully expressed.

God

God turned not from the fiercenesse of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled. David saith, if his wrath be kindled but a little, blessed are they that trust in him, implying their misery that be under it; but when there is the fiercenesse of his great wrath, they are miserable indeed who are under that.

In clearing of this, I shall first briefly discusse two or three questions, and then endeavour (as the Lord shall help me) to set it home to you in an application.

what the wrath of God is? what is the wrath of God, of which the Scripture speaks so often, and such dreadfull things?

In men we use to say, that anger or wrath is *perturbatione concitati animi*, the perturbation of a troubled spirit; but in God it is *tranquilla constitutio justi supplicii*, a calme and quiet appointment of just punishment. Plainly, wrath or anger in God is never attributed to him, in regard of any troublesome passion, or affection; but only in respect of the effect. I say, that wrath or anger is attributed to God, not *secundum perturbationis effectum*, but *secundum ultiionis effectum*. In a word then, Gods wrath is nothing but his revenging justice; which justice of God, as it simply burnes against sinne, the Scripture calls his anger: when it doth more fiercely excandescere, or sparkle out, it is called his wrath: the same justice, when it pronounceth sentence, is called his judgement; when it is brought into execution, it is called his vengeance: so that wrath, anger, judgement, and vengeance in God are all one: Gods wrath is his revenging justice, and when, I say, his wrath (when greatly kindled) is exceeding fierce, I meane it is a dreadfull, horrid, and fearefull thing to fall

1 Quest.
What the
wrath of
God is.

Answe.

The fierce-
nesse of
Gods wrath,

2 Quest.

Answe.

Psal. 90.11.

The fierce-
ness of it
illustrated
from di-
vers com-
parisons.

under the dint of Gods revenging justice.

How may the fiercenesse of Gods wrath appeare?

I answer briefly, it is impossible for any tongue to set it forth. *Moses* tells us, *no man knowes the power of Gods wrath*: God is not easily provoked, hee is slow to wrath: his wrath is as a great Bell long raising, but when it is once up, makes such a dreadfull sound, as no tongue can expresse. Many a poore soule feeles a great deale of it, whole Nations have laine under it; but never was any creature able to say what the power of Gods fierce wrath is. But if you will give your reverent attention one quarter of an houre, I shall (God willing) out of the holy Scriptures open something, which may in some degree make you conceive, how fearfull the wrath of God is, when it is once kindled. And doe not think that I shall speak of what concerns strangers, and not your selves; for I greatly feare, that before we part it will be too evident, that this fierce wrath is kindled against some of our owne soules who are here present. Indeed your calling and meeting this day for *humiliation, fasting, and prayer* seemes to tell all the world, that you beleieve that Gods wrath is kindled; and therefore being kindled, it is fit you should know what kinde of flame it is.

Amos 3.4.

Psal. 18.
7,8.

First, Consider by what dreadfull comparisons the holy Ghost useth to set out the fiercenesse of Gods wrath. As the roaring of a Lyon: the Lyon hath roared, who will not tremble? the Lord hath uttered his voice, who will not fear? To a terrible earth-quake, that makes the foundation of the hills to quake and tremble. But most usually it is set out by devouring fire, the most terrible of all the creatures which Gods hand hath made:

made: and mark what kind of fire it is: Sometimes it is compared to a shower of fire; God raines downe upon the wicked fire and brimstone and horrible tempest: raining downe of snares, and fire, and brimstone, is a horrible tempest indeed. If any mortall man had stood with Abraham, and seene the Lord raining downe flakes of fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrha, hee would have thought it an horrible tempest. Yea it is compared to a lake or river of fire, *Ezai. 30. ult.* The breath of the Lord (speaking of Tophet) like a river of fire and brimstone kindles it. Imagine the anger of the Lord thus set out, as if from Gods nostrils, and out of his mouth should come huge lakes or floods of fire and brimstone, streaming out upon the people with whom hee is angry: What dreadfull things are these? Yet further, Gods wrath is set out to bee such a fire as is altogether irresistible; so that the poore creatures on whom it falls, cannot possibly stand before it: and therefore usually when God is said to arise in wrath and fury, the people, that bee the vessels of this wrath, are said to bee wax, and straw, and stubble, dry leaves, and rotten hedges; and what are these to stand before huge stormes and floods, lakes of fire and brimstone?

And as it is irresistible, so it is intolerable; which is usually set out by weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

And lastly, Such a fire, when once throughly kindled, can never be quenched. There bee two expressions (among many others) in the Scripture, which bee very dreadfull, to this purpose: The one is *Deuter. 32. 26.* Where the Lord saith, that a fire is kindled in his anger; and mark what a fire it is, it shall burne to the lowest hell,

*The fire-
neſſe of
Gods wrath*

Pſa. 16. 11.

Gen. 9. 24.

<sup>The fierce-
re⁷e of
Gods wrath</sup> and shall consume the earth with her encrease, and set on fire the foundations of the mountaines. Such a fire as when once kindled burns up mountaines, earth, and world, and all, and never rests till it abide in hell, where there is no bottome, and there it burns for ever. The other is in *Nahum* 1. Where Gods fury and fierce anger is compared to fire which throwes downe rocks, licks up the sea, burns up the forrests, melts and burns the earth and world, and all that dwells therein. Certainly, that must needs bee a dreadfull and horrid thing which the spirit of Cod thus describes.

²
By the ef-
fects of it.

Secondly, Consider some of the effects of Gods wrath, and then you will conceive in some measure what it is. The throwing of many millions of Angels out of heaven into the lowest hell, was nothing but the effect of Gods wrath. The opening the flood-gate of all sin and misery upon all mankind, was nothing but an effect of Gods wrath. The deluge that over-whelmed all the world, all the plagues of *Egypt*, burning of *Sodom*, the earths opening and swallowing up *Korah* and his company, all the famine, pestilence, blood, that ever the world lay under, are but so many effects of Gods wrath. Nay the dreadfull appearance at the last day, when the *Potentates* and *Princes* of the world will bee humble Suiters to the hills and mountaines to fall on them, will bee nothing but an effect of the Lords comming in wrath, to render vengeance to his enemies. Yea to bee throwne to all eternity into the pit of hell, into utter darknesse, into the fire that never is quenched, and among wormes that shall never cease gnawing, all these are nothing but to be under the wrath of God. But above all these, and if ten thousand more could bee named,

that

that ore effect of it, in the Lords powring out the viall ^{The fierceness of} of his revenging justice upon the body and soule of our ^{Gods wrath} blessed Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, is most able to informe us, how great and fierce the wrath of God is: that when hee had but one Son who was his fellow (as the Prophet faith, *Awake sword and smite the man that is my fellow;*) yet this revenging justice being powred out upon him, made him (who in his person was no other then God himselfe, yet in his humane nature) when this cup was put into his hand, yea the very first taste of it made him sweat drops of blood trickling down to the ground, in a ^{Luk.22.44} cold winters night; and when hee had drunk it off, it made him cry out in the anguish of his soule, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken mee?* These effects may helpe us to conceive what a dreadfull thing it is to wrestle with the wrath of God.

But thirdly, Were I able to open the thing it selfe, and let you see it in the *causes*, you would instantly conclude. that it is beyond all apprehension. Conceive it thus, The revenging justice of God is Gods opposing himselfe against the creature; When God takes his creature into his hand, and by his almighty power upholds the being of it, that it may feele what the Lord Jehovah can doe upon it, and against it. This no living creature can conceive. When God hath only hid himselfe from his dearest friends, this very hiding of himselfe hath been so dreadfull, that it hath made them goe roaring all the day long. dried up their moisture, made their lives uncomfortable and a burden to themselves, turn'd all other comforts into gall and wormewood. Now if only an Eclipse of his loving countenance bee thus intolerable, what is it for God to fall upon a creature

*The fierce-
ness of
Gods wrath*

ture as his enimy? When a poore worme must not on-
ly stand under the weight of a huge rock falling upon it,
but of an almighty God. You that have large thoughts
may now easily conceive what a fearefull thing the
wrath of God is.

Ques. 2.
Who are
the ob-
jects of
this wrath
of God.
Ans. v.

Deut. 4.21.
2 Sam. 17.
27.
Psa. 89.12.

The third Question is; *Against whom* is this wrath
of God thus kindled?

I Answer; First, Gods wrath may be kindled *mildly*
and *gently* against his owne *deare children*, when they
walke not faithfully in his Covenant, when they lay
aside their filiall obedience, when they give occasion
to his enimies to blaspheme his Name: though hee
will not suffer all his indignation to arise, yet his fa-
therly displeasure may bee kindled against them. And
even this fatherly wrath, this gentle wrath, (if it bee
not a contradiction to call it so) these small drops of
his displeasure, are more unsupportable to them than
all the miseries of the world: Yea, they could more
willingly submit to the torments in hell (provided
that Gods countenance did but shine upon them) than
to undergoe that which this wrath of God sometimes
distills upon them: And yet all this while wee may tru-
ly say of them, they are children *under wrath*, but not
the children of *wrath*; not the people of his wrath, not
the vessels of his wrath.

But if you will know, Secondly, What are the peo-
ple against whom God hath indignation for ever; the
Scripture tells it you in this expression ordinarily, they
are the *children of Belial*; so they are usually called in
the Old Testament; that is, such as will not beare
Gods yoke; master-lesse children, yoke-lesse children:
And in the New Testament, they are called *children of
disobedience*;

Cel. 3.6.

disobedience ; as the Apostle , For which things sake the wrath of God commeth on the cbildren of disobedience.

The fierce-
ness of
Gods wrath

Now who these children of Belial, and of disobedience are, I must a little explaine to you , and then the Application will bee easie. I say therefore that these children that will not carry the yoke, are, First, all *unbeleevers*. I doe not meane *Negative unbelievers*, that is, those that doe not beleeeve in Christ, because they never heard of him ; but *Positive unbelievers*, who have had the glorious light of the Gospel shining to them, to whom the *Lord Iesu* hath been freely offered, as a Saviour to deliver them from wrath to come ; and yet they refuse to come in , and to accept of him, as hee offers himselfe in his *Gospel* ; because they doe not like to take him upon such hard termes : you may be sure the wrath of God rests upon these men. Turne but to *John 3. ult.* *Hee that beleeeves in Christ shall be saved* , hee that beleeeves not is a damned man : and how ? *the wrath of God abides on him*. Mark that expression, *abides on him* : The wrath of God takes up, as it were, his *habitation* in an unbelieever. So that what Gods grace sometimes said of *Solomons Temple*, *Here will I dwell for I have a delight in it* : So the wrath of God seemes to say of an unbelieever, *Here I will dwell, here I will abide for ever*.

Secondly, The children of disobedience and sonnes of Belial , are such, whose lives and conversations are contrary to the rules of the Gospel ; who as they will not take *Christ* to be their *portion* by faith, so they will not take *Christs word* in the Gospel to be their *guide* ; but they will live indeed without all yoke, doing what is good in their owne eyes ; these are the sonnes of Belial. You may see a notable description of them in the prophesie of *Zacharie, ch.7.v.8.* where the wilfull disobedience,

The fierce-
ness of
Gods wrath

obedience, obstinate stubbornnesse and intractableness is expressed by divers similitudes, all tending to the same purpose. They refuse to hearken, stop their eares, as not willing to hear Gods counsel, they pull'd away the shoulder, as an Oxe or Bullock that shrioks back from the yoak, or as one that should carry a burthen, pulls away his shoulder, when he should take it, and lets it fall: so these deale with the easie yoak, and the light burthen of Gods commandments. Yea, they make their hearts as an *Adamant Stone*; there is in them a stiffe and wilfull resolution to sin, whereby their hearts are as intractable to any goodness, as the hardest sort of stones, Flints, or Diamonds are to be wrought by the toole into any fashion we desire: when you have said all you can against their wantonnesse, uncleannessse, prophanness, pride, covetousness, &c. you prevaile no more than when an hammer strikes upon an anvile: Their hearts can easily reject all yee cannot beat a splinter off from them: then immediately it followes in the next verse. *Therefore there came a great wrath from the Lord of Hostes.* These are the sons of *Belial*, these are the vessels of Gods wrath.

Applicati-
on.

To praise
God for
deli-
verance from
it.

² Not to
envie the
prosperity
of such as
are under
it.

Now to apply this to our selves, it might first teach all who are reconciled to God by Christ, what infinite cause they have every day of their life, to blesse that grace of God, which hath not appointed them unto wrath, but by the blood of his own sonne, hath delivered them from *wrath to come*, and provided for them everlasting glory and happiness.

Secondly, it may likewise teach all that feare God never to envie the prosperous estate of any child of *Belial*, though waters of a full cup bee wrung out of them, though they swim in wealth and honour, and romp in this world, and have all their hearts can desire,

sire, and in the meane time account it their glory that they carry not the Lords yoak, never *envie their lot*; If any here knew of half a score good fellowes set at a banquet of wine, furnished with all the helps of mirth and jollity, if hee knew withall, that the shot to be payd for it, must be every mans *heart blood*, he would be loath to be one of the pack with them. I confesse it is hard not to be troubled at the prosperity of wicked men: even *David* and *Jeremy* found it a hard thing not to envie their prosperity. But stay till the shot be payd, enquire how able they will be to undergoe the wrath of God, enter into the *Sanctuary*, *understand their end*, and thy envie will bee at an end, but these I intended not to insist upon.

There is one only proper use for the present occasion and that is this; you are met this day together to *Fast* and *Pray* and *mourne* before the *Lord*; and (as I touched before) hereby you acknowledge that the wrath of God is kindled, and that your selves are called to take a course to turn away Gods wrath: and I verily believe this is the very end you aymed at, in calling us the unworthy Ministers of Christ to your help this day, that wee might bee assistant to you in whatever might turn away the wrath of God from you. Now two things were at large pressed upon you in the morning, as well befitting the work of this day. The one was to *rent*, and *break*, and *teare* every one of your *hearts* in the *seame* of your *sins*, kindly and throughly to humbly you in the sight of God. The other was to provoke you to a *strong resolution* to leave the waiers of sin in time to come.

In which two things, *humiliation* and *reformation*, stands the very life of unfained *repentance*, and the *spirituall* part of a *Religious Fast*; without which all our ab-

*The fierce
neffe of
Gods wrath*

*Psal.37.3.
Ier.12.1.*

*To help
forward
our repen-
tance,*

*The fierceness of
Gatnwrath*

In humili-
ation for
sin which
hath kind-
led it.

*Jerem. 13.
18.*

stinenesse and sackcloth, and bodily exercises in watching, hearing, &c. are meere abominations in the sight of God. I rejoice that you had these things set so home in the morning, some of my work being thereby spared. But the bringing this lesson home, if God set it on to your hearts, may help to fasten the counsell given you in the morning, *as a nayle in a sure place*. I shall endeavour to further your humiliation and reformation from the meditation of the fearfulness and dreadfulness of the wrath of God.

I must therefore entreat you all, (Honourable and beloved) since you have vouchsafed to call for the labour of a poor man to help you, let mee be as free with you, as if you were so many meane people: my duty this day is to doe that which *Jeremy* did: *God calls him in a mourning time, and saith, goe to the King and Queen, and say come yee down, sit in the dust, humble your selves*: So I say to you, *comedown*, forget that any of you are *Earles or Lords, Knights, or Gentlemen*, lay for a while these thoughts aside; and give mee leave to ask you two or three Questions, and bee so faithfull to your own soules as to think how you can answer them before the Lord. Are yee not children of *Belial*? (that is the very thing which you must answer in your own bosome) *that is*, are there not amongst you such as refuse to carry the *yoak of Christ*? who will not take Christ to be your Saviour as he offers himselfe to you in his *Gospel*? you will have him upon other termes than to make him your *King, Prophet, and Priest*; you would have him to deliver you from hell, but hee shall not bee your *Lord*, so, as for you to resigne up your selves to him, as a dutifull wife resignes up her selfe to her husband. And for your *conversations*, you will doe what

what is good in your own sight ; if you have a minde to sweare you will sweare ; you will lie , bee uncleane, dissemble, these things please you well and you will doe them. Now hear what I say, what thy outward quality or condition is I know not: but this I know, persons of your quality do not use much to be scared ; men are afraid to speak any thing that may make you tremble : but you must be scared, or we shall doe no good to you. You are now called to have your hearts rent, I have that to say, might sent the very cawle of you heart, even this, oh thou miserable and wretched worlde ! great is the wrath of God that is kindled against thee. This terrible Lyon roares against thee, a dreadfull fire is kindled, a horrible tempest is ready to fall upon thy head , showers and floods of fire and brimstone are even ready to be poured out upon thee : how art thou able to live with everlasting burnings ? how wilt thou dwell with devouring fire ? Thou that art crushed before a moth, how can thy heart endure, or thy hands be strong in the day that God shall deale with thee ? Thou that darst not think of lying one day upon a wrack, that canst not endure for two or three dayes to be wrung with the colick , that art not able to beare the thoughts of lying under the tearing of a Quartane Ague from Michaelmas to Easter ; how wilt thou bee able to stand under the fall of such a huge rock as the wrath of the Almighty God ? which every moment is ready to break downe upon thee. How wilt thou doe when these rivers of fire and brimstone shall be poured out upon thee ? and thou no more able to stand before them, than a few dry leaves are able to resist the hugh breaking in of many waters ? Oh beloved , would you with due care apply these things to your own hearts, and present them to your souls as things present,

The fie cr-
neffe of
G-ds wrath

The fierce-
ze of
Gidnarath

How this
may bee
done.

Ezek. 12.
37.

how would they bring down the most stubborn spirit!
how would they help to break the hardest of your hearts
before the Lord!

But there are two things which keep most people from being affected with them. The first is, These things are looked upon as things *a farre off*: Now it is a rule in *Opticks*, That things farre off, though they be *marveleous* great, yet seeme *very little*: a Starre that is bigger than all the earth, seemes no bigger than a candle being many miles distant from us. So while men look at the wrath of God, as they did at the Prophets Vision, *the Vision that he sees is for many dayes to come*, and he prophesies of *the times that are farre off*: And put the evill day from them: All these threatnings are but light matters. Secondly, it fares with most men in this point, as with some men that have shrewish wives, though their busynesse lie within doores, yet they have no heart to be there for feare of chiding: So though it be the most necessary work to think of these things; yet because their unquiet consciences upon the least serious meditation, are ready to gnaw and teare them, and make them sleep uncomfortably, they labour to drive off the thought of this thing as farre as they can, and will not think of Gods wrath due to sinne, from yeeres end to yeeres end. Whereas if men would bring it in *rempresentem*, and keep their eyes open to behold it, as a thing which *unavoydably* will come upon them, how admirably would it work upon mens hearts?

To this end, let me tell you a story which I have often read to this purpose. It is reported of a certaine *Christian King of Hungary*, who being on a time marvellous sad and heavie, his brother that was a resolute *Courtier* would needs know what he ailed; Oh brother, (saith

(saith he,) I have been a great sinner against God, and I know not how I shall appeare before him, when he comes to judgment: These are (said his brother) melancholy thoughts, and makes a toy of them, as Gallants use to doe: The King replyes nothing for the present; but the *custome* of that Countrey was, that if the Executioner of justice came and sounded a Trumpet before any mans doore, the man was presently to be led to execution: the King in the dead time of the night sends his Deaths-man, and causes him to sound his Trumpet before his brothers doore, who hearing and seeing the messenger of death, springs in pale and trembling into his brothers presence, and beseeches the King to let him know wherein he had offended. Oh Brother replies the King, thou hast loved me, and never offended mee, and is the sight of my Executioner so dreadfull to thee; and shall not I, so great a sinner feare to be brought to judgement before Jesus Christ? If we would thus suppose with *Hierom*, that we heard this Trumpet sounding, arise yee dead & come to judgment, it would work to the purpose. Oh set your selves therefore in Gods presence, and behold the Lord shaking his lap, (as *Nehemiah* when hee shook his lap and said, so God shake out every man from his house:) Thus will I shake into eternall destruction all the children of *Belial*, and then evidence be brought in against thee, (how great soever thou art amongst men) that thou hast a huge pile of sin heaped up against God, and still hast gone on to adde drunkennesse to thirst, opposing God, his wayes, and his cause, refusing grace offered freely, not willing to bee at peace with God, while thou hast any meanes to fight against him: when all these things shall be laid open before thee, and (as thy just reward)

Neh. 5. 13;

The fierce-
ness of
Gods wrath

God strike thee a full blow, and sinke thee to the bot-tome of hell, where thou shalt wish that thou hadst been a toad, or (as one in desperation sometimes wished) that thou mightst live there a thousand yeers, so thou mightst have any hope in the end, that the wrath of God might cease towards thee. Would not these things then work upon thee? Couldst thou then passe such a day as this, without trembling? Couldst thou be before the Lord, and not have thy heart rent and torn? Be perswaded therefore once more to bring it home to thy own soule, and say, as he said of his green fig, this grew in *Carthage* yesterday: This wrath, this sea of misery may break in upon me the next mo-ment: I am yet joviall and merry, but Gods venge-ance with woollen feet follows me close at the back, and will overtake me; if I cannot mourn at the hea-ring of wrath, I must burn at the feeling of it. The good Lord melt our hearts with the feare of these things, lest we be swallowed up in them.

*Raro ante-
cedentem
scelestum
dese uit
pede paena
claudo,*
Horace.

2
For Re-
formation.

Meditati-
on of
wrath how
it may
p omo c
it.
Ezay 33.

14.

And then for the second part, for your Reformation, would the Lord make this day, a day of Reformation to this honourable Assembly, what glorious things would be done by you! Now what more effectuall motive, what *Furies* whip, would more restraine from the practise of sin, or more drive to seek a shelter under the wing of *Christ*, and to get into the *safe condition* of the servants of God, than the beholding of this *devouring fire*, these everlasting burnings, which sinfull men will never be able to abide? I know such is the depravation of mans nature, that if there were any possibility of avoiding Gods wrath without leaving their sinnes, many men would resolve with that wicked *Cardinall* not to leave their part in *Paris*, for their part in *Paradise*: And

And with that noble man (which Luther speaks of) who professed, that if this life of going from whore-house to whore-house might last ever, hee would not envie any mans going to heaven. But this will not last, *There is great wrath prepared for the workers of ini-*
quity. And therefore my humble request is, that if any of you finde your hearts unwilling to submit to that godly counsell, given you in the morning, of turning to God, doe but think what your sinnes, which you prize so much, will cost you. They say the Pope hath a book called *Taxa camerae Apostolicae*, wherein men may know the rate of any sinne; upon what termes a man may keep a whore, be a Sodomite, or murder his Father, &c. But here is a rate-book, where any of you may know what a beloved sinne will cost you; not a farthing token lesse, than to lie under the devouring fire of Gods wrath to all eternity. Porters will try their burthens upon their shoulders before they engage themselves to carry it, doe thou so. It is reported of Master Bilney when he thought he should be burnt, he would put his finger into the candle to see how he could endure burning, doe thou often so; goe often alone and say, here is a sinne marvellous pleasant, such a sinne gaines me thus much every yeere, but there is wrath to come: And therefore as Elihu said to Job, *Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroak;* a great ransome cannot deliver thee, hee will not esteeme thy riches, no not gold, nor all the forces of strength. Fourthly and lastly, there is one use peculiar to you that be our Noble Senators, the Lords and Commons gathered in Parliament, wee know your care is for our good, but this I humbly propound to you, you will never

be fierce-
nesse of
Gods wrath

Job 36.18.

To the
Parlia-
ment to
make it
their
great
care to
pacifie it.

*the fierce.
reſe of
Gods wrath*

never doe us good, if Gods wrath bee not taken away from us: were you so many *Garralieis*, so many *Hemans*, so many *Solomons*, so many *Angels* gathered together, and all of one heart to studdy Englands good; you can doe *England* no good, if Gods wrath, which is kindled against it, be not pacified. And therefore let your great study bee borh to finde out what hath kindled Gods wrath against us, and what may remove it from us: of which I shall bee able to give you further knowledge in the next and maine lesson to which now I passe. *viz.*

*Doct. 2.
In refor-
mation
God may
goe on to
desolation.*

That the sins of a people may come to that passe, and Gods wrath may bee kindled to that heigth, that notwithstanding their reformation, God will goe on to a desolation. In handling whercof I shall (the Lord helping mee) discusſe these three things. First, I shall open the thing in *Thesi*, clear the conclusion, and see if I can make you understand it. Secondly, enquire in *hypothesi* whether it concerne *us* or not; whether our Nation, Church, or State, may bee thought to be in any danger of it. And thirdly, I shall endeavour to make some uses which may bee fitting for such an Assembly as this is.

For clearing the conclusion, I shall endeavour these three things. First, I will demonstrate the truth of it. Secondly, I will enquire whether the signes of it may be known, and how farre they may be known: Whether the Lord hath left any foot-steps or rules for us to prognosticate by, and so to judge when a people is come to that passe: And if so, then, Thirdly, what those tokens are: And I shall endeavour to speak plainly and freely of them all.

For

For the truth of it, were there no other Instance to be found in any other story, but this in my Text, it were sufficient to prove that such a thing may bee. That which hath been already, may bee so againe. *Isaiah*, we see, wrought such a *Reformation*, that the whole Kingdome did, all his dayes, follow the Lord; and notwithstanding all this, God turned not from his fierce wrath; but went on to destroy them. The Lord threatens else-where that he would doe it, *Zeph. 2. 1, 2.* *Gather your selves together before the decree bring forth, before the day passe as the chaffe, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you:* As if he should have said, *The decree is not yet come forth; but if once it bring forth, it will be too late for you to seek for mercy.* There be other examples (though not so full as this) sufficient to prove this truth: As *Nineveh* for one: The Lord sent the Prophet *Jonah* to preach *repentance or destruction* to them; and you know it is said, *The King laid aside his Crown, and called them all to repentance; and repent they did; and God saw their works, and for a while forbore that City;* and yet the judgement of most Interpreters is, that within fourty years after, the City was destroyed, even in the same age wherein the *Reformation* was made.

That Instance of the *Jewes* is most remarkable, in our Saviour Christ's time: *John Baptist* came before him, and turned the hearts of the parents to the children, and the children to the parents; made ready a people prepared for the Lord; there went out to him *Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region about Jordan*, and were baptiz'd of him, confessing their sins. And Christ had so many followers, that the Scribes and Pharisees said, *all the world went after him; that is, the body of their Nation.* And the Apostles converted so many, that they said to *Paul*, that *A. 21. 20.*

God may
goe on to
desolation.

Proved by
Scripture.
2 Chro. 34.

Jonah 3.

Not now
standing
Reforma-
tion

there were many myriads, many millions of Jewes that beleeveth, who are all zealous ; yet notwithstanding, in that very age, wherein the Golpel wrought thus effectually among them, the wrath of God came upon that Nation, to the utmost, and scattered them over all the world.

It is likewise recorded of the *Romane Empire*, which for a matter of six or seaven hundred yeares had been a dreadfull enemy to the Kingdome of the Lord ; first against the Church of the Jewes, and afterwards against the Christians (while it was unconverted;) in *Constantines* time the Empire turned to Christianity, and in the very first age of the Empires Christianity, came the destruction and dissolution of it. So that there is a truth in it, that Gods wrath may be so far kindled, that he will accept of no attonement, but will inexorably proceed to desolation.

That this
may be
known.

The second Question is. Whether this may be known; whether we may possibly find out any direction, whereby to judge of Gods purpose of thus comming against a people. *Answe.* And for that, I confess, a great many men, especially such as are not willing to have any dangerous truth preached to them, doe think that all preaching and study, in such points as these, is of no more certainty than the judgement of *judiciale Astrology* : tell them of wrath to come, or desolation of Churches, or destruction of Common-wealths ; they look on such, as shall tell them of these things, as upon a company of ignorant people, who will be of their Authors faith ; or esteem them as proud men, who would be thought to have more acquaintance with Gods secrets, than their neighbours, and therefore they must adventure upon such high points; or at the best, conceive them to be sullen, discontented, melancholick people, who look on

every

every thing with black spectacles ; but in the meane time themselves will never bee perswaded, that any can give them rules of directions to judge in this kind : But you are wile : and if you please to take two or three places of Scripture into your serious thoughts, you will conclude quickly , that this is a point may be known : The one is *Jerem. 8.7.* where the Lord blames the stupidity of the people, that whereas *the Stork in the heavens knowes her appointed times ; and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow observe the times of their comming ; but his people would not know the judgements of the Lord :* arguing them to be more silly and simple than the very birds and fowles, who could observe what seasons were fit or unfit for their staying or removing in such or such a Countrey ; and Gods people remained ignorant of the seasons of Gods approaching judgements. Another place you shall find *Hos. 7.9.* where the Lord saith of *Ephraim*, that is, the ten Tribes, *gray haires are scattered here and there upon him , yet hee knowes it not :* The meaning, plainly, is this ; That as gray hairs are remembrances, and plain tokens of declining old age comming upon men ; so there were symptomes and tokens of *Ephraims* ruine comming upon him , and yet hee would take no notice of it. Our blessed Saviour also in *Mat. 16. v.1,2,3.* tells his hearers , that *they could make Almanacks for weather, and discerne the face of the skie, and yet could not discerne the signes of the times,* (implying that Prognostications might also bee made , if men would study the right way) whereby they might know what God intends to doe with a people. So then, there is one step gained, that *something* may be known of Gods approaching judgements.

God may
goe on to
definition.

Notwith-
standing
Reforma-
tion

And ho-
tar it may
beknown.

Mat.106.23

Mat.24.36

But that I may not deliver any thing but what you shall have a full suffrage for, I adde in the next place, and consecre, that because all seasons are in Gods hands, and all people under his absolute prerogative; so that, if hee pleaseth, hee may destroy a Nation for oze sinne; and againe, if hee pleaseth, hee can exercise so much mercy, that no sinnes of a people can set any bounds or limits thereunto; nothing but his owne holy will setting limits to his patience, long-suffering and mercy; and because also God doth alwayes beare such a tender regard to his *owne children*, that where-ever they live, hee doth often for their sakes (as it were) *reverse* his sentence of desolation. In regard of these things and some others which might bee suggested, I thinke I may say, no mortall man can possibly determine when the *precise time* of this or that Nations utter ruine is certainly come. What Christ said of the day of Judgement, may fitly bee applyed here, *the very day and houre* of the last Judgement *no man knowes*, but only the Father, and the Sonne, to whom it is revealed from the Father, and that also since his Resurrection; but yet there bee signes whereby wee may know the approaching of that day: So wee may say of this, though wee cannot know the very time of a Nations desolation; yet wee may know when the ruine of it comes neere at hand. And what learned men say of them, who have studied for the *Philosophers stone*, though they could never finde out the *Elixar*; yet in their search after it they have found out *many excellent things*, admirably usefull for mankinde: so in this search if wee cannot determine that such a Nation will infallibly

fallibly bee ruined, yet wee may certainly finde such things as thereby to learne what to feare, what to expect, what to pray against, what to strive after, &c. And so consequently the handling of this question may bee exceedingly usefull to such an Assembly, as I am now called to speak to in the name of God.

This then is a second step that wee may know such things as may make us feare desolation, and consequently labour to prevent it, or prepare for it.

Thirdly, the maine question is to enquire what are the Tokens, the gray haires, the flourishing of the Almond tree, whereby wee may guesse at mans going to his long home.

I answer, Politicians, and some Divines will tell you of the fatall period of Kingdoms, that they have their youth, their strength, and after a time their declination; and shew by abundance of experience, that States seldome continue above five or six hundred years without some fatall change: But we must goe by a surer rule than this. It is not length of time, which makes God weary of shewing mercy; but, what Solomon saith of Kings, *for the transgressions of a land many are the Princes thereof*: so for the transgressions of a land, and the transgressions only, many are the ruines thereof. Now there is one rule which God hath alwayes proceeded by in the dissolution of Churches and Kingdoms ever since the beginning of the world, and that is this. That whensoever the sins of any Church, Nation, City, Family, or Person (you may take it as large or as narrow as you will) are come to a full measure, then God infallibly brings ruine upon them. This is the rule which

Notes
standing
Reforma-
tion

Gen. 15.16

I shall make plaine to you: God hath set severall vessels to limit the sins of all Nations, beyond which they shall not goe; as once God said to the waves of the Sea, *hitherto thou shalt goe, but here thy proud waves shall be staid*: so God hath said of the sinnes of Nations, Families, Persons: thus farre I will forbear thee, but farther thy wickednesse shall not exceed; then comes thy end. Take foure or five cleare evidences for it in the Scripture. First that speech of God to *Abraham*: I will give thy posterity all this land, but not yet, because *the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full*: though they were *Amorites*, God would beare with them, till their iniquities were come to the full, and then he would spare them no longer. Another is *Zachary* 5. verse 6. The Prophet in a vision saw an *Ephah*, a thing like a bushell, and moreover the Lord told him, *this is the resemblance of the Ephah, throughout all the earth*: as if God should have said, this is not only proper to this people, but this rule I go by throughout the whole world: and what was that? the *Ephah* is brought out, and into the *Ephah* is cast a *Woman*; this woman sate and filled the *Ephah*: then one brings a talent of lead for a *cover* to it, and that stops the mouth of it, and shuts the woman in; then come two women with the wind in their wings, and they take up the *Ephah* and carry it between heaven and earth, and place it in the land of *Shinar* or *Babylon*, there to build it an house, and to set it upon its owne base. Now what is the meanirg of all this? there is one word in the vision, which is a *key* to open this *lock*, viz. *this is wickednesse*, the meaning whereot is, That the Lord had brought the Jewes from the captivity of *Babylon*, where they had been

been leaventy yeaſes : as ſoone as they came home, though they turned not to idolatry, yet they proved Stark naught. God ſets them their Ephah, puts their iniquity into a vefſell, and doth (as it were) ſay, goe on till yee have filled the Ephah ; but as ſoone as that is full, I will clap a talent of lead in the mouth of it, I will take a course yee ſhall finne no longer in this land, but will ſcatter you into *Mesopotamia*, into the land of *Shinar*, and there bee as wicked as yee will. So you ſee when the measure is full, then vengeance comes.

*God may
g: on o de-
ſolation.*

Take another instance in the firſt of *James* verſe 15. *When luſt hath conceiued, it brings forth ſinne, and ſinne when it is finished, brings forth deaſh* ; which is of the ſame interpretation with the former, and ſhewes us ſins progreſſe in the riſing, reiſing, and ruine. Firſt a man hath luſt, a wicked corrupt heart that hee brings into the world ; every man comes into the world with a heart full of luſt, now this luſt brings forth iniquity ; God leaves people to goe on in wickedneſſe, if they be not ſuch as he meaneſ to ſave ; and when their ſinne is perfeſted, it brings forth death ; when it comes to the full forty weeks, and hath gone the full time, then comes deſtruction. Take yet two instances more both in the fourteenth of the *Revelation*, verſe 14. &c. in the *Parables* of the vintage, and of the harveſt ; when they were ripe, then ruine comes. Till then God uſeth to beare with people : ſmaller judgements often come before ſinne is ripe, and are removed againe ; but when once the measure is full, then God ſaith, as in *Nahum*. chap. 1. verſe 6. *He will make an utteſt end, affliction ſhall not riſe up the ſecond time* ; he will ſo

Notwith-
standing
Reforma-
tion

Why God
defers till
sin be full.

Isay 10.

Rom. 2,
4, 5.

How the
fulnesse of
a Peoples
sinnes be
knowne.

What sins
are desola-
ting sins.

so doe it at once, that they shall not need to feare a second.

Now if by the way you desire to know why God defers so long, and rather cuts not off wicked men sooner. I answer, it should suffice us, that it is his *will* to do it; but further he doth it, partly that they may be for exercise to his people to *purge* and *humble them*, as *Ashur* was his rod to whip his people, before the rod was burnt. And partly to declare his long-suffering, and patience, thereby to leave them without excuse if they prove incorrigible. Thirdly, this is for salvation to some, who in the meane time are to be gathered in: and this I take it, the Apostle meanes, 2 Pet. 3.9. when he saith, the Lord defers his comming to judgement, because the Nation of the Jews is first to be gathered in. So that as the Angel staid till *Lot* was plucked out of *Sodom*: so God hath some brands to snatch out of the fire, for whose sakes he defers the execution of vengeance against them, whose sins call for it. For these causes, and it may be others not known to us, but secret to himselfe, doth God deferre the full execution of his wrath till sinne be ripe.

But how may wee judge when the sins of a people grow to the full? I answer (and but briefly, because I would not be burthensome to an attentive auditory; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak in the best;) to finde out sinnes fulnesse foure things must come into consideration. First, what kindes of sinnes they are which are land-destroying sinnes. Secondly, the *quantity* of these sinnes. Thirdly. the *aggravation* of them. Fourthly, which is the upshot of all, the *incorrigiblenesse* of them.

For

First, the kinds of them, I meane thus, there was never any Church or Nation without sin, but all ^{God may goe on to desolation.} sinnes are not Church-wasting sins, nor Land-destroying sins: but there are sinnes which are called ^{Idolatry.} abominations, such as make ^{Levit.18.28.} a land *spue out the Inhabitants*: such ^{Deut.9.5.} as make God drive them out: And they are some against the first table, some against the second table. Against the first table, First, the sinne of *Idolatry*. Evermore, as Idolls come in, God ^{Ezek.8.} goes out: when there was an *Image of jealousy set up*, God goes ^{Ezek.43.8.} farre from his sanctuary. God likes no such neighbours. When *Ephraim offended in Baal*, he *dies for it*: when *the meane man bowes himself*, and *the great man humbles himself to stocks and stones*, ^{Hos.13.} *Essay. 2.9.* God will spare them no longer. When the glory due to ^{JEHOVAH}, is communicated to dumb Idolls, this God will beare at no peoples hand. And the reason is plaine, this is as the *marriage bed* to God, this provokes his jealousy, *which is his rage*, then *he will accept of no ransome*: This therefore is the *abomination that makes all desolation*.

Secondly, the sinnes of *prophaning, contemning, scorning and persecuting of Gods holy things, his holy day, his holy servants*. I joyne all these sinnes together, because they come all from the same roote, that is, malignancie against God; God himselfe is prophaned, slighted, contemned in all these. Thou hast *despised my holy things*, and prophaned *my Sabbaths*, therefore thou hast caused thy day to draw neare. God therefore would make *Moab* ^{Ezek.22.4.8.} as *Sodom*, and the *Children of Ammon* as *Gomorrha*, because they reviled his people: but there is one proofe may serve in stead of an hundred.

No notwithstanding reformation

2 Chron. 36. The Lord did a long time beare with them; but when once they came to that passe that they polluted his House, despised his Word, mocked his messengers, misused his Prophets, his wrath grew hot against them till there was no remedie: God could then beare them no longer, but would utterly destroy them. And it is our Countrey-man, venerable Bedes observation, that when the old Britaines grew to that height of sinne, as to cast odium in religionis professores, tanquam in aduersarios, God presently sent in the Saxons, who destroyed them all.

Sins destruc-
tive to hu-
mane society.

Gen. 6. 11.
Jon. 3. 8.
Ezek. 22. 3. 4.
6. 9. 12.
Hos. 12. 7.
Hos. 4. 2.
Sensual lusts
of drunken-
nes and un-
cleanness.

Hos. 6. 10.

31. 1. 4. 2. 11.

There are also some sinnes against the second Table, which greatly helpe to fill the measure of a peoples iniquitie; as First, such sinnes as are destructive to humane societie, Cruelty, blood, oppression, deceit, these were the sinnes which brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly. These are the sins which the King of Nineveh saw would ruine him, and his Kingdome. Secondly, the sensual lusts of druckennesse and whoredome; I joyne these sinnes together, because they are usuallie joyned in the Scripture, and seldom severd in mens practice: And you shall cleerly in the search of the Scripture, finde them to bee among the abominations which help to fill up the measure of a peoples sinne, and prepares them for judgement. *I have seene a horrible thing in the house of Israel* (saith God, speaking of the sins which made God hew them down) *there is the whoredome of Ephraim; Whoredome, and wine, and new wine take away their heart*: This was one of the things that made God have Controversie with the land, to make it mourne,

mourne, and to take them all away. I have not time to prosecute these things, you shall easily find that these are gray haire in any Nation wherever they are found.

Secondly, the *Quantity* of these sinnes is very considerable, when they are *universall*, no Nation ever was without them, but when once they come to spread as a *Gangrene* over the *whole body*, then the measure quickly grows full: when *all flesh had corrupted their wayes*, then the flood came rushing in; when from the *crowne of the head*, to the *sole of the foot* the *whole body was full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifid sores*, then it was to no purpose for God to strike them any more with any hope of healing. You shall finde in the 24. of *Ezekiel*, a notable description of *Ierusalem*s condition, when *Nebuchadnezzar* came to destroy them, the Prophet compares the citie to a great pot, whereinto all the choice pieces were put to be boyled, the *thigh* and the *shoulder*, and all the *choice bones*, but they were *all rotten flesh*, whose scum would not boyle out, meaning, that the *Princes* and *Rulers*, *Prophets*, and *Priests*, and *People*, were all overspread with abominable wickedneses. So in the 22. of *Ezekiel*, all states are brought in; the *Prophets* devouring souls, the *Priests* violating the law, prophaning holy things, *Princes* and *Rulers* oppressing, the people robbing, &c. then God powres out his indignation, and consumes them with the fire of his wrath.

But this must be understood with this caution, *Yet to be understood* that when I say all, it is not to be understood, as if God would spare a people untill the whole multitude grew wicked, and none remaining on his side:

Notwithstanding reformation God had *seven thousand in Israel*, who were faithfull to him in the worste time of *Ahab's apostacie*: But the meaning is, when the number of such as abstaine from these abominations, is so small, that they are not *considerable*, to God they are allwayes *considerable*, but not alwayes *considerable* as to the *turning away of judgement*, or to the preventing of ruine. *Ten righteous men* would have beene *considerable* in *Sodom*, for the sparing of it, when *five* would not.

So the summe is, that when these abominations are generally spread, and very few in comparison abstaining from them, a people growes ripe apace for destruction.

The aggravation of these sins.

Dan. 9. 12.
This is the
very argument
of the whole
chapter of the
second of Je-
remie. See also
31c. 1. 5.

3 The third thing considerable, is the *aggravation* of these sinnes, and therein I shall onely give this *one* briefe rule; that in all *places* and *countreys*, *houses*, *families*, or *persons*, the more *mercie*, *light*, and *meanes* these sinnes are committed against, the sooner is the *vessell* of their *iniquitie* come to the full. *Amos. 3. 2.* *You only have I knowne of all the Nations of the world, & therefore I wil visite you for all your iniquities.* *Ezek. 9.* *God begins at his Sanctuary, and with the ancient men*, who had stood longest before him. And *Daniel* makes this the reason, why God brought a greater evill upon them, than upon any other Nation, because no other Nation had enjoyed the like meanes to keep them from sinne, or to bring them to *repentance*. And in the *22* of *Esay.* The *valley of vision* had the greatest burden of *wrath* of all others: that is, the people of *Israel*, to whom God had sent all his Prophets from time to time. And there is great reason, why sins against *light* and *covenants*, *mercies* and

Con-

Conscience should be most provoking ; It is thus even amongst all ingenuous men, he that *eateh my bread*, (saith David) *bath lift up his heele against mee*, ^{God may goe on to desolation.} if it had been a stranger, I could have borne it : Is *Psil. 41.9.* this thy kindnesse to thy friend, could *unnaturall* ^{2 Sam. 16, 17.} *Absolon* say to *Hushai* ? This then is a plaint case, that the more mercies a people sinne against, the greater is their sin, and the sooner comes their judgement.

4. The last thing considerable to finde out the *Incorrigeable-
fulnessse of sinne*, is the *Incorrigeblenesse* of it, and it <sup>nesse of these
sins, when
they are too</sup> the Lord grant that we can quit our selves of this, we shall yet doe well : by this *Incorrigeblenesse* I strong for meane, when the sinnes of a people are growne so great, that they are too strong for the *mounds* and *baukes* which God hath set to keep them in compass. Now God hath set Foure Boundaries for sinne, and when sin is growne too strong for *all these*, you may conclude that (reserving or excepting what God may doe in his absolute prerogative) if he goe by his wonted rules, that Nation is going to her long home.

First, God hath set *Conscience* and *shame* to be boundaries among all people, to keep sin in compass : Conscience to make them stand in awe of God : shame to make them stand in feare of men : These two God hath set up (as his Officers and heralds) in all mens hearts ; and when once men can run into sin, as the *borse into the battell*, ^{Prov. 2. 14.} ^{Ez. 3. 9.} *joycing to doe evill, proclaiming their sins as Sodom, not being ashamed, and past all feeling*, there is one bauk broken downe, one Boundary plucked up.

Secondly, another bauke that God hath set, is

No withstanding reformati-
on

For prayers
examples &
councils of
the godly.

Job 22. ult.

Ezay. 57.1.
Gen. 19.

13. Gen. 33.
Jer. 14. 11.

For Magi-
strates and
Ministers,
which comes
to passe either

when they
take part
with it.

the example, and conversation, and prayers of his owne people, whom he scatters here and there amongst men, and great is the power and force of their presence to keep sinne in compasse, partly by the Majestic of the Image of God, shining in them, partly by their holy examples, partly by their wise and seasonable counsells, admonitions, reprehensions, partly by their prayers, whereby they bring downe restraining and constraining grace: Now when these are either taken away from a place by death, or driven away by persecution, as Lot out of Sodom; or living amongst them, God takes off their edge to pray no longer, as Abraham for Sodom, or Jeremy for the Ierues: There is a second Boundary pulled up.

The third is, that of *Magistrates* and *Ministers*, whom God hath invested with his owne authoriti, and put upon them some beames of his owne Majestic and Image, put his sword into their hands, and armes them with power to keep sin in, and beat it downe; The *Magistrate* having the sword of *Justice*, and thereby being made *custos utriusque tabulae*; and *Ministers* having the sword of the *Spirit*, these two are strong Rampions, and Banks, they are the *τοκάκιον*, to hinder sinnes course, they are Physicians to cure the hurts of Gods people, and when once the sins of a Land grow too strong for these, farewell all, you will soone heare the daies of their visitation are at hand. And this is done in three Cases.

First, when *Magistrates* and *Ministers* take sinnes part, and in stead of joyning with God against sin, they joyne with sin against God: as if the *doggs* should joyne with the *wolves* against

gainst the sheep, and the Shepheards.

Thus it was in *Jeremies* time, he found the people harder than a rock to be wrought upon, but he said, *Surely these are poore and foolish, who know not the way of the Lord, I will get me to the great men, and I will speake to them, for they have knowne the way of the Lord, and the judgement of their God*; but were they such, or did they so? marke what follows, *these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bands, in stead of maintaining Gods yoke, and strengthening Gods hands, they broke them* ^{Jer. 4.5.} *a pieces: and what followes, therefore a Lyon out of the forrest shall slay them, an evening Wolfe shall spoile them, a Leopard shall watch over the cities, every one that goes out shall bee torne in pieces.* Thus it was likewise in *Hoseaes* time, when the Prophet was a foole, and the spirituall man was mad, when the Princes would be drunke with bottles of wine, &c. Thus it was in *Ezekiels* time (as ^{Eze. 22.15.} was before touched) immediately before their desolation.

Secondly, when *Magistrates or Ministers* are da-
stardly, when they are afraid of sin and sinners, and
dare not appeare for God, when such men have
God, Conscience, their office, the lawes, all on their
side, and yet dare not appeare against Idolatry, pro-
phanenesse, violence, sensuality; as it shewes the
men to be of a base spirit, so it argues the sins of
that place to be of great strength, even fit for judg-
ment. Thus it was in the 22. of *Ezekiel*, verse. 30.
when all such were growne corrupt, *I sought for a*
man among them, that is, some Phinehas to stand in the
gap, to make up the hedge, some zealous Ministers
to

*God may gree on
to desolation.*

Notwithstanding reformation

See also *1cr. 5.1.*

Or doing
their duty
cannot yet
prevaile a-
gainst it.

And for the
judgements
of God.

Zeph. 3.6,7.

Amos 4.

to stand up and mediate with God for them, and testify in their ministry against them, but I found none, and therefore I poured out my indignation upon them.

Thirdly, in case any *Magistrates* or *Ministers* doe appeare on Gods part, as *Isiah*, *Jeremiah*, and others did in these forlorne times, yet they prove too weake stakes, they are able to doe nothing; the inundation of wickednesse beares them downe, and runs over their heads: In a word, when *some Magistrates take part with sinne*, *others afraid of it*, and the *remainder*, who are faithfull can *pre-vaile nothing*, this Rampire is likewise overthrowne.

4 There is but one more, which when it is likewise cast downe, destruction is at the very doore, and that is, Gods lesser judgements: God sometimes keepes *petty-sessions*, to prevent great *Assiizes*, inferior executions, to prevent utter desolations, which when they prevaile not, it is a certaine token of extreme wrath. Sometimes God afflicts neighbour *Nations*, destroying their *Cities*, that the rest might receive *Instruction*, and their dwelling not be cut off: As Judges will hang up a thiefe upon a Gibbet, to keepe others from the gallowes. *I have overthrown some of you* (saith God) *as Sodom, I have smitten you with blasting and mildew, I have sent among you the pestilence, yet yee have not turned to me, why should ye be smitten any more?* You shall see this notably expressed in the 24. of *Ezekiel*, Where God compares *Ierusalem* to a pot, and all the Inhabitants to flesh boyling in the pot, but all the boyling would not fetch out their scumme,

no threatenings, no visitations, no interi^r Judge-
ments could prevaile with them, but still their <sup>God may goe on
to deſo'ation.</sup> scumme, their blood, their filthinesse and lewdnes
abode in them; marke then in the 13. verse, what
doome God gives of them, because I have purged
thee, and thou wast not purged, I have tryed all means
to doe thee good, and thou wilt not be reformed,
thou shalt never be purged from thy filthines any more,
till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee, I the Lord
have spoken it, and I will doe it. And that Example
in the Sixth of Jeremy, is most remarkable, where
God useth such a parable as this, the bellowes are ^{v. 29, 30.}
burnt, the lead is melted in the fire, the founder works
in vaine, for the wicked are not taken away, repro-
bate silver shall men call them, for the Lord hath re-
jected them. God here compares himselfe to a
silver-smith, who takes a piece of ore, and tryes
all his art to divide betwixt the drosse and the me-
sall, but cannot doe it, and at last throwes it away
with indignation, saith it is base stuffe, on which he
will never bestow any more labour. So God seems
to say, my Ministers have spent their lungs, dried
up their throats, all my other judgements have been
tryed, but the wicked are not taken away, they are
all base drosse, I will bestow no more paines upon
them.

And now you understand what the gray hairs of
a State or people are, & when a people are ripe for
destruction, when the time is come that God will
pass them no more, you shall not need to enquire by
what meanes he will doe it, he hath all in his owne
hands, he hath famine, and pestilence, and syrpr^d, and
wilde beasts, and fire, and earthquakes, and if none of

Notwithstanding reformation

What kind of
Reformation
may meet
with desolati-
on.

Ier. 18.7,8.

Eze. 4.

ser. 3.10.

Matth. 12.43,
44,45.

all these doe it, hee hath flies, and lice, and grasshop-
pers, & rats and mice enough to destroy the strong-
est kingdome in the world in a moment; if hee
but whistle, hisse, or call for them.

Objection. It is true may some say, if people goe
on in their wickednesse, and prove Incorrigible,
no marvaile though God proceed thus against
them: but that it should be the case of a people,
who set upon Reformation, this is strange: And
how wil this stand with the doctrine preached in the
forenoon, that *when a Nation repents, God wil repents, &c.*

Answer. In such an assembly as this, a short
answere(if true) will satisfie. First, God never
promised that the sincere Reformation of a few
should prevent the judgement of a multitude: if
Gods time of Execution be come, *Noah, Daniel*
and *Job* shall deliver neither son nor daughter, who
are not turned home to God. Secondly, I an-
swere, that though the Nation joyned in the Re-
formation, it was not in *sincerity*, if it had been
found, the doctrine in the morning would have
carried it away, and I must have had another In-
terpretation of my Text. It is true, *Iosiah* carried it
by his authoritie, but the peoples hearts were not
right. And *Jeremy* saith no lesse: when I removed
Samaria out of my sight, *her treacherous sister Indah*
turned not to mee. Yes, might the people say, we
did turne to thee under good King *Iosiah*, but it was
but fainely (saith the Prophet) and it appeares to
be so, for as soone as ever *Iosiah* was dead, they
made a *universall Apostacie* from the Lord, and
so their Reformation was but like that of the Na-
tion of the *Jews in Christs time*, which our Lord
com-

compares to the uncleane spirit, going out for a ^{God may give o}
while, and returning againe with seven ^{to desolation.} Devils
worse than himselfe. As if *England*, by the help of
this noble Parliament, who lay the cause of God to
heart, should joyne in a Reformation, though a-
gainst the haire, it would come to nothing in the
end. And so I have in some measure cleared this
doctrine in *Theſi*, how farre the approaching ruine
of a Nation may be knowne, and what the ſignes of
it are. The ſecond follows, and that is;

Whether this concerne us. And what anſwere would you have me give you? I could willingly anſwere in this, as *Daniel* did *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he was to interpret a dreame to the King, which in the true exposition foretold *Nebuchad-* ^{Whether this may bee thought to be our owne caſe.} *nezzars fall*: It is ſaid *Daniel* ſtood ſtill for an hour, and his thoughts troubled him, and in the end ſpeakes out, *My Lord, the dreame be to them that haue thee, and the Interpretation of it to thine enemies*. So ſay I, oh let the parallēl of this be ſome other people: oh that it might not fit *England*; but doth it fit it? Right honourable and beloved, your great wifedomes, your diligent inspection, your ample Intelligenſe, your faithfulness and ſinceritie makes you better able to judge, than my meanness can attaine unto, who am none of the wifeliest obſervers of the time: but I muſt ſpeake, and what I ſpeake, I ſhall ſpeake freely and humbly, I would I could ſpeake ſorrowfully: I know I ſpeake to wiſe men, who can well judge what I ſay.

First, I hope verily we are not yet come to that It is hoped
paffe, that God ſhould ſay of us, I will paffe by ^{that wee are} *England* no more; blessed be God, wee have a condition. ^{not yet in that}

*No. viii
N. wibland-
ing reformation*

And why.

gracious King, many Noble Peers, many excellent Commons, who have already done great things for God; I need not repeat them, all the Kingdome knowes them to their comfort. Yea, and blessed be God, the same gracious Sovereigne and honorable Assembly of Parliament doe yet enquire what is further to be done, what wrath is kindled, and how it may be quenched, and have called the whole Kingdome, to afflict themselves before God, that his great wrath might bee turned away from us. And as yet wee have a sprinkling of Ph:neha:zes, worthy Magistrates, who in their severall Countreys & Countiess darc appeare in Gods cause against sinne, and the boldest sinners. And wee have also a good sprinkling of faithfull Ministers, who stand on the watch towre, and blow the Trumpet, and give the people warning. And for ever blessed be the Lord (which is not the least pledge of our hopes, for the lengthning out of our tranquillity) we have many ten thousand Saints in *England*, who not onely abstaine from the abominations of the times, but mourne for them, and give God no rest night nor day, untill he b̄ow the heavens, and come downe, and set up for himselfe a glorious Throne amongst us: And unto these God hath made many promises of sparing the land for their sakes, and that their posterities after them shall be blessed.

*Yet feared that
we are very
near it,*

But as I hope this, so the Lord will be a witness with me, that I feare whether all these persons, and their Graces doe bear a just proportion to the meanes and mercies, which God hath given to *England*; or to that huge Inundation of sinne, wherewith

Eng-

England is overrun at this day. And here, had I a tongue to speake, and you and I hearts and eyes to powre out teares and sorrow, wee might make this place a *Bochim*, a place of weepers. For, what kind of these sianes doe not overflow us? You will say at first, not Idolatry; but I tell you, neither were the *Germanes* carried away with Idolatry, when their desolations broke in upon them; nor the *Iewes*, before their last destruction. The measure of our Iniquity may possibly be full, though this sin come not in; but God knowes, and you know that wee have not only abundance of Idolatrous Papists, who are proud, insolent and daring, but abundance of Popish Idolatrous spirits, superstitiously addicted, willing to embrace any thing that goes that way, only they will not have it goe under the name of Popery. And for the other sinnes of contempt of Gods holy Ordinances, his day, his servants, and all his wayes, oppression, cruelty, defrauding of brethren, the sensuall sinnes of uncleannessse, especially that of drunkennessse, Goe but to the places of greatest resorts, Market-Townes, populous Cities, and Faires, &c: and your hearts would tremble to thinke, how our land is overspread with these: oh Beloved, the generality of the people of *England*, is extreamely wicked, and which argues our case to be most miserable, it seems to heare downe, and to break over all our baukes; multitudes sinning with a whores forehead, proclaiming their sianes as *Sodom*: And the *vox populi* is; that many of the Nobles, Magistrates, Knights and Gentlemen, and Persons of great Quality are arraied Traytors and Rebells against

*God may goe on
to desolation.*

*because all
these sins
are found a-
mongt us.*

*And that in
great mea-
sure, which
prevales*

*over Magi-
strates.*

*Woruld-
ing reformati-
on*

Ministers.

gainst God, taking part with wicked men, and wicked causes against the Truth, Patrons of Ale-houses and disorders, checking inferior Officers, who discover any zeal for God against an ill cause: That in many of their families (not to mention Religion). there is not so much as a face of Civilitie: Many others of them, who seem to wish well, dare not draw out the sword which God hath given them, and some few others, borne downe in their places with the torrent of wickednesse. And as for our Ministers, how many sad complaints and petitions hath this Honourable Assembly received against many hundreds of them: multitudes of them rotten and unsound in their doctrine, and so vicious and corrupt in their lives, that they fulfill that which Archbishop *Abbot* said in his *Lectures* upon *Isaiah*, professing that his heart bled within him, to thinke of the miserable condition of the precious soules of many people, who had such Ministers, as *Iohannes Aventinus* speaks of, who (if they w're not in the Ministerie) would not be thought fit hog-heardes to keep Swine. Besides thousands of others, who (God knowes) want either will or skill to doe the Lords worke faithfully. And the residue, who have endeavoured to give the people warning, and to teach them the good way of the Lord, have been a long time born down and opposed, as the troublers of our *Israel*. Sure I am, whatever our Ministers are, or doe, the sinnes of the land are too strong for them, and our people retaine unsubdued to Jesus Christ.

Yea which is yet worse, the very judgments of God have wrought little upon us, all the long and
hca.

*And the very
judgements,*

heavy pressures of the Neighbour Churches, his rods upon our selves, terrible and wasting pestilences and famine, his blasting all our enterprises, his scaring us with rumors of warres and bloud prevaile nothing; wee still grow worse and worse: Indeed if any sin grow out of fashion, (as cloashes doe) then wee leave it, otherwise wee goe on boldly and impudently, let God threaten or doe what he will. And all these evils are aggravated by being committed against greater meances and mercies, than any nation under Heaven enjoys this day besides our selves.

And which is yet sadder, (oh that I were mistaken upon condition I were tyed to a recantation) our dealing *this last year* is more injurious against God, than heretofore. The Lord hath gathered such an Assembly of Noble Peeres and Commons, who have done such great things, that many of us began to hope our *Pilgrimage* through this wilderness had beene almost ended, and that *England* would now turne to the Lord, and become a people zealous of good workes: But verily so far as I can understand, the body of the Nation makes little other use of all the mercies of this last yeare, but to abuse all the liberties procured both for Church and Commonwealth, to greater and bolder sinning against God: and now also, which yet speakes more sadly, the Lord God beginnes to appeare against us, not onely in permitting many unexpected blocks and rubbs, huge trees cast in the way of our Worthies, that they cannot march on in their strength, and so the much expected Reformation stickes long in the birth; but God hath drawne out, and furbished the

*God may goe on
to desolation.*

*and mercies of
God.*

*And God be-
gins to ap-
peare against
us,*

and wherein.

Norwithstand-
ng reformation

the sword, and made it begin to drinke blood in the Neighbour Nation, which when it once begins to drinke, seldom is put up againe, till it be drunke with blood: this God hath suffered to bee drawne out upon our deare Brethren in Ireland, upon our owne flesh and blood, and that by a Nation, by whom (though they may seeme contemptible to some, as being barbarous, unarmed, &c. yet) we may feare, that God will plague us, because wee have not laboured to bring them to the knowledge of God and our Lord Iesus Christ. *Mene Tekel.* The Lord grant that being put into the ballance we be not found too light.

Application to
our selves:

First, to be-
lieve that we
are in danger,

1 King. 22.
which we are
loth to doe.

What shall we doe then? First, beleevē it, *not* that *England* shall bee ruined, I say not so: but beleevē that great is the wrath of *God* which is kindled against us, that wee stand upon ill termes before him; that though he may save us by his Prerogative, yet if hee proceed with us at common Law, according to his usuall rule with other Nations, we are in great danger to be utterly lost. I presse this the rather because we are a *secure Nation*, not willing to beleevē any thing that may disturbe our ease. One *Zedekiah* who will preach pleasing things, shall be beleevēd more than twenty *Micahabs*: such as tell us wee are the most flourishing Church in the world, the strongest people by Sea and Land, all other Nations Court us, and have their owne hands full, the *Irish* be only discontented, weake men, and will soone be quieted: such I say shall bee believed more than an hundred *Jeremies*, who would put us in feare. It is reported of *Honorius* the Emperour lying at his pleasure at *Ravenne*,

venna, when newes was brought him that *Rome* ^{God may goe on} was taken and spoyled, hee thought they had ^{to desolation.} meant a fighting Cocke which hee called *Rome*: so when wee are told of danger, we slight all that is spoken, and beleevē nothing in that kind: But the Lord grant that this security of ours bee not a *Calme before an earthquake*: *When they say peace, peace, then sudden destruction comes upon them.* But ^{1 Thes. 5. 3.} let us believe and tremble: the *Wiseman never hides* ^{Prov. 22. 3.} *himselfe till hee sees the evill comming;* and the first ^{Jon. 3. 5.} step to *Ninevehs* peace was their believing that *God* was comming against them.

But you will say that is the way to discourage men, and you doe not well to discourage them in whose hand and courage our welfare lyes. Oh beloved, let mee not bee so interpreted; were this ^{But till wee} objection fitt in other cases? suppose one should ^{doe it, our} come and truly tell us the *enemy* were landed, the ^{danger in-} *Sea* were broke in, the *House* or *City*, were on fire, ^{creases:} were it fit to object, oh say not so you will discourage men? Discourage or not discourage, if this be not told how shall the enemy bee driven backe, the breach of waters stopped, or the fire quenchēd? But neither need this discourage, but rather furnish us with matter of humiliation and action. *Yosiah* *sate downe and wept*, when hee understood Gods wrath was kindled, and *fell to reformation*. *Ezra* *rent his garment and plucked off his haire*, and *fell to his worke*, and so let us doe: Let us beleevē that Gods displeasure is against us, that we may feare before this Great God, and labour to get his wrath turned quite away, and that is the second Vse.

And we shall never use the right means for safety.

^{2 Kings 22.}

*Notwithstanding reformation**I. sc.**To prevent it
First by mour-**ning for it.**Numb. 12. 14.**Amos. 3. 8.**v. 9, &c.*

Secondly, let us all labour in the right way to turne this wrath of God from us, and that. First, by mourning under it, God lookes we should bee ashamed when hee spits in our face, and takes it wonderfull unkindly, if wee tremble not when this *Lion roares.* Consider seriously of that place in the twenty two of *Esay.* There you shall see an enemy was comming against *Ierusalem*, and God was much displeased because they tooke not the right way for their safety, and so in, that hee said that iniquity should never bee purged from them till they dyed, and yet see what they did, *they scoured up their armour, they gathered the waters, that the enemy might have no benefit by them, they repaired the breaches in the walles, made a deepe ditch for greater fortification:* what hurt was there in all this? Oh but they begun at the wrong end: the Lord called them to *weeping and mourning, and to baldnesse, and to girding with sackcloth,* to tremble before him because of his wrath, and this they regarded not, and therefore God would never pardon it. Till therefore we mourne because of Gods displeasure, all other meanes of welfare will faile of that comfortable effect which we desire. I know the world makes a scorne of this. *you are one of the mourners, but let our soules bee numbred among those mourners;* God will *restore comfort to these mourners:* and no man knowes the power which these poore mourners have to turne away Gods wrath.

*By personall
reformation.*

Secondly, and as we must mourne for this fulnes of our sins, so every one must helpe to *empty the vessell,* as we have helped to fill it: the fuller our ves-

vessell is with sinne, the neerer our ruine is, and if
 wee could knock out the bottome of the vessell, or
 by any meanes empty it, Gods wrath would passe
 away with our sinnes: oh helpe to empty it, your
 Atheisme, your prophanenise, your opposing of
 good men, and good causes, your adulteries, lies,
 &c. get them out by all meanes; all Gods threat-
 nings speake to us, as the waves of the Sea seemed
 to speake to the mariners in the first of *Ionah*. *Io-*
nah had told them that the tempest came for him,
 and till he was cast over the sea would never be
 quiet, yet they rowed hard to carrie *Ionah* to land,
 but the waves seemed to tell them, cast *Ionah* o-
 verboard or we will fetch you over board. Out
 therfore with your lusts, God hath no other quar-
 rell against us, he doth not afflict us willingly, he
 saith to us as *Iacob* said to the wise woman of *Abel*,
 far be it from me to swallow up or destroy a city
 in Israel, deliver only *Sheba* the sonne of *Bichri*, or
 throw his head over the wall, and I am gone. Doe
 thou so, finde out all thy beloved sins, say to thy
 darling lust, as *Iunius Brutus* said to his son, thou vil-
 laine, shall I nourish thee to destroy the Common-wealth,
 and stabs him: shall I walke in these wayes, to bee
 the ruine of the Church and Common-wealth? the
 Lord rather strike me dead with a Thunderbolt.
 Let vs therefore every one, begin to sweep before
 our owne doore, and wee know not how soone
 the whole street may be made cleane.

Thirdly and lastly (Right Honorable, and
 beloved) you are to be our Physicians, and repair-
 ers of our breaches, the hornes of Gods wrath be-
 gin to push at us, you are the Carpenters that must
 What the Par-
 liament should
 doe for our
 safety.

Notwithstanding
reformation

Following
Iosiah's ex-
ample.

1. In mourn-
ing, because of
Gods wrath.
2 Kings 23. 11.
etc.

cut off these hornes : I therefore make this humble
suite to you, that / as you have besought his Ma-
jestic to call a day of Fasting and Prayer through-
out *England*, and wee hope wee shall have many
more, till the fierce wrath of God be turned away)
so in all your thoughts, to doe *England*, *Scotland*
and *Ireland* good, you would set downe this, that
the turning away of Gods wrath, is of greatest con-
sequence : if you let God goe on to be angry, doe
what you can, wee shall lose all at home and a-
broad. Thus did *Iosiah*, when once he understood
out of the Booke of *G O D*, that the *Lords*
Wrath was kindled, hee presently sends to *Hulda*,
the Prophetesse, to enquire what was to be done,
that they might quench it, esteeming all other
businesse unseasonable and fruitlesse, while that
fire was burning. And here I shall onely in a few
words, commend to you the example and pra-
ctice of this brave King, whom this Text so mag-
nifies. First, hee *mournes*, and calls all the people
to mourre with him, and that through Gods
mercy, you have done.

: Rooting out
Idolatry, &c.

Scondly, hee goes out in that way, whereof
you heard more in the forenoone, and breaking
downe all the *Images and reliques of Idolatry* : the
Lord set it close to your hearts, that you may
leave nothing which is contrary to Gods pure
worship.

3 In execution
of Gods
vengeance up-
on his en-
emies.

Thirdly, hee executed the justice and vengeance of
God upon the Instruments of the Kingdomes ra-
ine, the *Idolatrous Priests*, digging the very
bones

bones of some of them out of their graves, the same Lord direct you, that in your great wisdoms, you may be as the Angels of God to discern what is to be done with them who have beene the troublers of our peace, and the greatest kindleis of Gods wrath against us: spare whom yee may spare with Gods good will, but remember it is foolish pity that destroyes a city: let not the men escape whom God appoints out to punishment.

Fourthly, he resolvesto reforme Religion and the worship of God, and to set it up, and maintaine it according to the word: and to that end he cals together the Priests, and Prophets, the Elders of Iudah and Jerusalem, and with them enters into a covenant before the Lord to walke after the Lord and to keepe his Commandments, &c. oh that the Lord would put it into the heart of you all to doe the same; you know what you have bin oftē petitioned for, the God of all wisdome direct you in due time to proceed in this cause, and if in your Wisdoms, you shall find it fitting that a grave Synod of Divines should be called to informe your Consciences what is to bee done, I beleech you follow the direction of Gods Word in it

5. And then for the manner. Fiftly, he did all according to Gods law, he consulted not with flesh and blood, enquired not into termes of policie, how farre the state would beare it, or how far the

God may goe on
to desolation.

4 In setting up
and maintain-
ing Gods true
Religion and
Worship.

2 Kings. 23. 1,

2. &c.

Exactly, accord-
ing to the
Word.

*Not with Gyant
ing reformation*

people would concurre without grumbling : but did according to all which God had appointed in his Word.

And lastly, he did it with *zeale and fervencie*, he laid not out his strength in his owne cause, and then use diversions and diminutions in God's cause; but there was his strength laid out, where hee knew Gods jealousie lay. The Lord make you such *Iosiahs*, such zealous men, what *Anakims* or *Gyants* would you prove, you might (with *Briareus* the Gyant, with a hundred hands, of whom the Poets feigne) take Thunderbolts out of the hand of God, and so save your selves, your families, and the Nation. Go on yee Worthies of the Lord, and thus deliver us. If there be any healing, any deliverance, you shall be our Saviours : if there be none, you may with *Iosiah* get the judgement respited for your life time; let the *worst* come, the glory of the Lord shall not onely be your *reward*, but your *rereward*, your *safety* : you shall deliver your *soules*, and your *children*, after you shall be blessed: doe this, and the Lord God be with you.

And that with
all their
strength.

Encourage-
ment there-
unto.
Obadi. 21.
Ezay. 53.8.

FINIS.

